

**FUN CHRITSMAS
GIFT GIVING GAME
AND
WRITING ACTIVITY
FOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL ELA
NO MONEY NEEDED!**



ELA Core Plans
Teacher-Written Standards-Based Lesson Plans



Gift Exchange Game

1. Choose something from home that you can give away in a gift exchange game. Do not go out and buy something. It can be something funny, but it must be appropriate for school. If you are not sure if it is appropriate, ask your teacher.
2. Do not tell any other student or friend what your gift is! This is the number one rule. The game we are going to play will not work if others know what your gift is.
3. Wrap the gift, and bring it to class.
4. In class, you will write a paragraph that describes your gift in a creative way. You must not use the name of the item in your paragraph, and you may not use any words that are associated with its actual use. For example, if you brought in an umbrella, you can not use the words *umbrella* or *rain*, or *used to keep someone dry* in your paragraph. Instead, brainstorm creative uses for your gift. Do not think about actual uses for this item. For example, if it's an umbrella, do not write "It keeps you dry when it rains." Instead, you could write, "It can be used as a fly swatter or a swimming pool for a baby duck."
5. Try to make your gift sound appealing, no matter what it is.
6. Someone will choose your wrapped gift and before unwrapping it, this person will read your paragraph to the class. We will play a gift exchange game in which wrapped gifts can be "stolen". You want your paragraph to convince your classmates that your gift is wonderful, even if it isn't.
7. Only after each person has a gift will we unwrap them to see what's inside.
8. Shhhhhhhh, make sure you do not tell anyone what your gift is. It must be top secret for the game to work.

Your Paragraph Should Include the following:

- **A topic sentence** – This sentence should state what the paragraph will be describing. It can be something like,
This box contains a wonderful and useful gift.
- **At least three supporting details** – These sentences should describe the object in a fresh, creative and original way. Make up a use for the object other than what it is actually used for. Be persuasive! You may write more than three sentences for this part of your paragraph, but not less.
- **A concluding sentence** – Wrap up your paragraph with one last sentence to convince your classmates that this is a wonderful present that everyone will want or need.

Make sure your paragraph...

- **Uses specific and vivid word choice.** Do not use “baby words” like *big*. Instead of words like *big* use *immense* or *gigantic*.
- **Has voice** – Write in a way that your paragraph is interesting and fun to read.
- **Uses correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar** – Read back over your paragraph. Make sure you capitalized the first word of every sentence and used correct punctuation. Look up any words that you think may be misspelled. Make sure you do not have any fragments or run-on sentences.

Remember

Do not tell anyone what your gift is.

Try to make your gift sound wonderful in your paragraph.

Be creative!

Name _____

Gift Giving Paragraph Rubric

Criteria	Possible Points	Points Earned
Paragraph is complete and contains a topic sentence, at least 3 supporting details, and an ending sentence.	20	
Supporting sentences provide good details and describe the gift in a creative way.	20	
Word choice is effective, precise, and well chosen. "Baby words" are not used.	20	
The paragraph is interesting and written with voice.	20	
There are very few grammar, spelling, or capitalization mistakes in the paragraph.	20	
Total Points	100	

A large, rounded rectangular area with a dashed green border and a red background. The interior is white and contains 15 horizontal black lines for writing.



Check out our fun lesson focusing on [analyzing figurative language using the song “Mr. Grinch”.](#)

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